

UNCLASSIFIED 07/76

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TELEGRAM

CONTROLS 4436
7 Jul 76
1530

INDICATE
☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

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FROM AmEmbassy BUENOS AIRES		CLASSIFICATION [REDACTED]
E.O. 11652:	XGDS-2	
TAGS:	ASEC, PINS, PINT, AR	
SUBJECT:	Federal Police Chief "Resigns"	
ACTION:	SecState WASHDC IMMEDIATE	ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044) U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS Margaret P. Grafeld, Director (X) Release () Excise () Deny Exemption(s): Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full () Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to Date Declassify on Reason
Ref:	[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 4436	
AMB POL-3 POL/R LEGAT CHRON SY	<p>Ref: Buenos Aires 4272</p> <p>1. Interior Ministry communique released last night (July 6) announced resignation of new Federal Police Chief Corbetta. Corbetta had run into trouble almost immediately after his appointment when he made it clear to his subordinates that he meant what he said in his speech (see reftel), that is, that while he intended to press fight against subversion to full, he expected police to use only legal and ethical methods. He would not, he reportedly told subordinates, tolerate any illegal arrests, torture or murders. He is said to have warned them he intended to make unannounced inspection of police stations and that if he found any illegally held prisoners he would fire those responsible and bring charges against them in courts.</p> <p>2. Police reaction against their new Chief was immediate</p>	

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CLEARANCES:
POL/R:DLSmock (in draft)
LEGAT:RWScherrer (in draft)
SY:GSBeckett (in draft)

A/DCM:WBeal

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and intense. Many ranking officials in Federal Police began to complain to Army contacts that Corbetta was damaging "campaign against subversion" and that he was "unreliable" and/or a "leftist himself". One police source even insisted Corbetta to Legatt that ~~XXXXXXXX~~ was a Montonero. Bombing of Federal Police security office on July 2 simply raised police tempers ("you see what happens when we get soft on subversion!").

3. Trying to assert his authority, on July 5, Corbetta, in a win or lose situation, fired two high-ranking police officials, one of whom was a close friend of Interior Minister Harguindeguy. In firing them, Corbetta pointed out that the two were, as commanders, responsible for the security of bombed building. They had failed in their responsibility.

4. Corbetta's gamble failed. Police resistance to him was too great and his support from the Interior Minister (and perhaps higher) insufficient. Faced with a near revolt in the Federal Police, Harguindeguy asked for Corbetta's resignation. His ouster is a disappointment to moderates and may encourage Federal Police to believe they can carry on their vigilante-type activities unimpeded. They may be right.

5. Corbetta is to be replaced by General Edmundo Ojeda. He has the reputation of being extremely bright. ^{and tough} Whether or not he will be able to control the Federal Police where Corbetta failed remains to be seen. Indeed, it will be a critical indication of the government's intentions if he even makes the effort.

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Classification

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OPTIONAL FORM 163A
(Formerly FS-413A)
January 1976
Dept. of State